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FRIDAY
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THE TEXAS
CHAINSAW
MASSACRE

2



Ed Gein -
the original
Leatherface



Faces of terror
- making the
macabre masks



Leatherface Chainsaw Maniac

As seen in **The Texas Chainsaw Massacre** (1974)

Movie moment

LEATHERFACE CHAINSAW MANIAC

As seen in *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974)



After an entire night's ordeal at the hands of a deranged cannibalistic family, Sally Hardesty manages to escape. The thwarted Leatherface flies into a demented rage, brandishing his trademark chainsaw above his head. It is the most iconic moment of the film, and perhaps even of the horror genre itself.

ESCAPING THE CHAINSAW MANIAC

The Texas Chainsaw Massacre is a powerfully disturbing movie that keeps you gripped until the very end. The closing scenes of the film, in which we see a foiled Leatherface venting his rage, are unforgettable and legendary...



This movie moment opens with Sally's escape from the cannibals' house. It is already dark, a subtle effect that cleverly highlights how long her ordeal has lasted.



Having grabbed and started up his chainsaw, Leatherface exits the house, hot on his victim's heels. His bulk is emphasised by the low camera angle.



Sally's agony, as Leatherface and his brother chase her towards the main road, is genuine – she had hurt her ankle during the previous scene.



As they reach the road, the brother is hit by a massive 30-wheeler trucking down the road. To avoid really hitting the actor, the view from the cab was shot backwards, with the lorry in reverse.



The lorry driver helps Sally into the cab. Director Tobe Hooper had Leatherface scribble on the door with his chainsaw, like a child, thus playing up the character's mental problems.



The driver and Sally escape out the other side and the driver fights back by throwing a metal wrench at the pursuer's head. The prop was actually made from blue wood by art director Robert Burns.



The blow sends Leatherface twisting and he rats his leg open with the chainsaw. Watch closely and you'll see how he squeezed the bigger blood bag to make the wound pose.



Sally flags down a pickup truck. This scene had to be re-shot several times because Gunnar Hansen, playing Leatherface, kept catching up with Marilyn Burns before she could climb into the back.



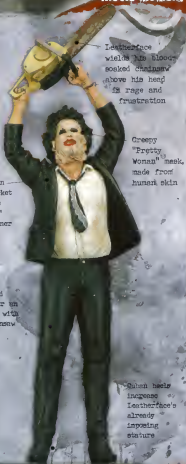
Sally watches her pursuer as the truck pulls away. She howls hysterically, not quite able to believe that she is finally safe. The stress of a long, hot shoot made this scene look all the more realistic.



As the hot Texas sun rises and girls against the camera, Leatherface limps desperately after his disappearing prey, waving the chainsaw at her frantically. His frustration is palpable. With the realization that his final victim has got away, he stops in his tracks and thrusts the chainsaw aloft. To the evil drone of the motor, he dances around crazily like a child throwing a temper tantrum, and whips the lethal machine above his head. Then the movie cuts to black. That last image is so powerful it is now instantly recognisable by fans and non-fans alike.

"It was one of those magical moments of film making"

Daniel Pearl, cinematographer



Leatherface wields his blood-soaked chainsaw above his head in rage and frustration

Creepy "Pretty Woman" mask, made from human skin

Dressed in smart jacket after the cannibal's sick "dinner party"



Lacerated leg, after an accident with the chainsaw

When he's in the scene, Leatherface's already imposing stature

This symbol indicates a close-up feature on the following pages.

Movie moment close-ups

GOLD LIGHT OF DAY



Getting the light **G**olden at the end of the film was crucial for *Chainsaw* director Tobe Hooper. He wanted to create the effect of early morning light to indicate not just the unbearable length

of Sally's torture, but also the dawning of a new day and therefore hope — hope that maybe she will survive. Not only that, but that time of day often belatedly goes as the "magic hour," bears mysterious, almost unreal properties; something that was certainly not lost on Hooper.

The Texas director realized there were two possible ways to capture dawn. The crew would either have to wait every day and shoot for a couple of minutes at dawn, or—

dusk, with the possibility of grading the light down further in the editing lab. Or they would have to wait for a cloud to come along, pass in front of the sun and provide an overcast light again for a matter of minutes.

Neither technique was ideal, since both significantly restrict the times at which filming can take place, as well as the duration of filming. Waiting for a cloud in high summer in Texas, for instance, is no mean feat, as Hooper explains: "We're all standing there looking into the sky, waiting for the next cloud to come a hundred miles." Despite the limitations though, both light effects were used. When Sally leaves the house, the crew waited for a cloud and started filming the second it passed the sun. And the end scene of Leatherface dancing in front of the sub was shot during the last few minutes of sunset. According to Hooper, by the end of the last day of shooting, "the sun was just right and it was probably two or three takes of just go—go nuts!"

BLOOD, SWEAT AND TEARS



For Marilyn Burns, who played Sally, the end of the film was particularly grueling. The entire movie had been filmed wide or less in sequence, so these closing scenes


were shot on the last day. On that day, as makeup fake blood had been poured over Burns, she shot her hair was stained. Hooper said, "I was a mess," relates Burns, who by the final day of shooting

had had enough. Unfortunately for her, however, it wasn't quite the final day, because Hooper hadn't got the shot of her in the truck that he wanted. "So when I was crazy at the end of the movie, laughing hysterically, that wasn't editing, that was me having to go back and do this one more time!"

"I was a mess"

Marilyn Burns, who played Sally

DANCING WITH DEATH



So spectacular, chilling, yet strangely beautiful are those closing seconds of The Texas Chainsaw Massacre that they have been seared into the minds of movie-goers the world over. It is a marvellous piece of cinematography. As lead cameraman on the film Daniel Pearl himself puts it, "it was one of those magical moments of film making." The finished scene was but a few moments out of a much longer, carefully choreographed "dance" between actor Gunnar Hansen and Pearl. Using a hand-held camera, Pearl skilfully followed the violent swaggers and elegant prowesses of the chainsaw-wielding killer. So well did Pearl synchronise with the energy of this sequence, that Hooper felt "he was somehow electrically connected to the action".

It was not without its difficulties, though, especially as far as the mask-wearing Hansen was concerned. After all, he was truly waving a real working chainsaw in the direction of his colleagues. Hansen recalls "At one point I looked out and saw through the little toy eyehole Danny running away because he was trying to avoid being hit. And behind him was Tobe with a cigar in his mouth and one of the producers and they were scurrying away to keep from being hit by the saw."

Fortunately Pearl was moving in the right direction to avoid the hazardous power tool and the sequence worked out. Everything, it seems, just came together: the lights, the actions combined superbly to make a truly unforgettable and iconic take. And, notwithstanding his concerns, Hansen still refers to the filming of this sequence as his favourite thing in the movie.

ALAN JONES
the expert opinion

"It's the closing moment of the scariest movie ever made; Leatherface spinning in impatient rage after Sally's escape, waving a clattering chainsaw above his head. But this shattering climax is also one of the most iconic images in the whole of horror movie history. So effective was this image, detailing the sheer animal frustration felt by the frenzied member of the cannibal clan, that it became the cornerstone of the movie's whole advertising campaign in many countries.

When released in America in 1974 Hooper's classic slasher was promoted by artwork showing Leatherface about to do his buzz-cutting worst to the most-looked Pam. Stricter censorship didn't allow that elsewhere, so another way of warning the faint-hearted about the raw terror contained in the film had to be found. So, it was this defining snapshot of man's inhumanity that was carefully chosen. Very soon it became the most recognisable and imitated Leatherface pose of them all.

Until this major turning point in American Gothic realism, no one had seen a power tool – usually sold in hardware stores – used in any other context. However, there is absolutely no illusion over its intended purpose in this pose. This combined with the coldly masked man wielding it fuels further frissons of unease. When the realisation hits home of what this still life instant represents, the nightmares have already begun, even before seeing the horror on screen. And that's why this key image of fright has become so indelibly printed on the horror conscious."

Movie moment bonus feature

MEET LEATHERFACE

As perhaps the most legendary movie monster in the pantheon of horror villains, Leatherface needs no introduction. Meet Texas' most aberrant son...

You'd be mad to poke around in a dim and dusty house, set back from the road in the middle of Nowheresville, Texas. You never know what might be lurking in places like that, but whatever your personal fear, it would probably never take a form so teeth-jaringly appalling as what comes out of the back room of the house in *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*.

Leatherface is a 6'4", 300-pound lumbering hulk of meat. Slow, plodding, severely mentally retarded and murderous to the bone, he is dressed in slaughterhouse apron and overalls when we first meet him and—most disturbing of all—his face is covered in a crudely stitched mask made from human skin.

Subhuman slasher

It is obvious to us fans that Leatherface's targeted victims

that not everything is right with this guy. You just need to clap eyes on the brute. Not only is he wearing the faces of his victims—and that's a fairly large hint—but there's something about his movements that tells you that he's deranged, disturbed and retarded. There's absolutely no way that you can reason with this maniacal meathead.

His movements are languid, but bristly a terrible power and every small movement is deliberate and purposeful—letting you know that this is a methodical killer who wastes no energy on superfluous motion and nothing will stop his murderous rampage.

A killing machine

From the moment he bursts onto the screen in *Chainsaw*, Leatherface relentlessly hurls his way through the cast of assorted non-Trooping teens. Unlike many horror movie villains, there seems



DRESSED TO KILL

Leatherface has three changes of clothes, that go with each of his three masks—a slaughterhouse apron to go with the Killing Mask, an old lady's skirt, pinny and wig for the Grandmother Mask and a suit and tie for the famous Pretty Woman Mask. But what actor Gunnar Hansen (and his co-stars) would have given for a few sets of extra clothes. To ensure continuity, Leatherface's costume couldn't be washed. After 3 weeks of long hours of filming and strenuous chase scenes in the hot Texan sun, Hansen was by his own admission rather "ripe."

Hansen also encountered problems with his Cuban heels. They were difficult to run in and while racing through the woods he slipped and fell. The racing chainsaw narrowly missed his prone body on landing.

When Leatherface chases after Sally in the closing scene, you'll see him skid to change direction—the only safe method when running with a loaded chainsaw!

"You're crazy! You've gotta make it stop!"

Sally Hordesty



FILM FACT

To prepare for the part and get a handle on Leatherface's physical presence and movements, Gunnar Hansen spent several days as a guest of the Austin State School for the profoundly retarded and mentally disturbed. He spent his days following the inmates around, trying to blend in, imitating the way some walked and picking up others' habits and mannerisms.

There would be no rhyme nor reason behind the killings. We are not provided a backstory — this bringer of death and destruction is no Jason Voorhees or Freddy Krueger, reaping revenge on those that have wronged him.

It has been suggested that the educationally subnormal Leatherface was mistreated as a child and like a beaten dog he only knows his own world-of hatred and

pain. But it seems that Leatherface has crossed a moral line and cannot distinguish between animal and human. Hailing from a family of abhorrent cannibals, he treats people as mere meat — his motivations are as simple as just filling his belly, a very basic drive.

Leatherface registers no human emotion whatsoever — the very suggestion that Sally

could be anything other than for eating is just too much to grasp. When in desperation she says that she'll "do anything" for the cannibal family, they roar with laughter. The idea is simply preposterous to them.

Slaughterhouse style

Leatherface's killing style is ruthlessly efficient. He smashes skulls, thrusts victims onto meathooks and uses his chainsaw to

dice them with not a single shred of sophistication. It is even questionable whether he takes any pleasure from his actions, making him all the more terrifying.

The throng, goring with one of his chainsaw fills the sonic canvas of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, never seeming to be absent from the moment Leatherface rips it into action. Although, he also uses a sledgehammer. It is his trusty power tool that is his signature weapon.

The soft side

Bizarrely for such a merciless killer, there is a certain gentleness to Leatherface around his family. Adorned by the masks, he often assumes the feminine role in the household. The three brothers and the granddaddy have a perverted sense of family values. They treat him firmly, but with care. Even so, it may be simple fear of the brothers, since it's hard to imagine a cold-hearted killer's emotions stretching to respect or love.

**"Aba do hil ito giba giba
(That'll do it, let her have it, get her)"**

Leatherface

SKIN DEEP

Leatherface is never seen without a mask. Under the mask he is an unknown quantity — there is the sneaking suspicion that he doesn't exist without a mask. Whatever the features or personality beneath those gruly borrowed faces, the

rearers don't know what they are and neither do we, the viewers. Is that why he is so terrifying? As Hooper divulges: "The way we tried to create him, there is nothing under the mask, which is what makes him so frightening."



BEHIND THE MASKS

Leatherface is one of the most recognisable faces in horror movie history. However, it's not actually his face that we recognise, but rather his gruesome namesake masks, made from his victims' faces. Read on to discover just how these incredibly realistic props were created...

Just like the saying "you are what you eat", Chelmsow co-writer Kim Henkel said of Leatherface that he "is what he wears".

According to Henkel and director Tobe Hooper, who created the character together, Leatherface has to put on masks to express himself, because he can't do it himself. The three masks that appear in the 1974 movie have been dubbed the Killing Mask, Grandmother Mask and Pretty Woman Mask. And each one of them is integral to Leatherface's character. When he's slaughtering

innocents he wears the more masculine Killing Mask. When he wants to be

domestic and helpful he wears the Grandmother Mask. And when he gets dressed up for the dinner party he dons the infamous Pretty Woman Mask, complete with *red lips*.

Spare parts

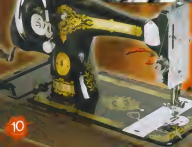
As with many of the on-set props, the success of Leatherface's masks was largely down to the efforts of one man, art director Robert Burns. When creating the props, Burns really got into the minds of the on-screen killers. He realised that they would have body parts left over from people they had killed, including skin and hair, and that they would probably put these to good use.

The perfect formula

Burns's aim was to make the masks look as close to dead human skin – and therefore as realistic – as possible. A lot of time was spent experimenting with different materials to come up with the perfect "formula", as Burns puts it.

Particularly important for him was to find the necessary translucency, since human skin is quite thin. The colour, too, was imperative – he didn't want to have to paint the masks, because paint has an opaque effect that skin doesn't. Burns

(From top to bottom, art director Robert Burns moulds the masks, paints on layers of liquid latex, cuts out the eye-holes, teaches up the features, and finally tries one of the masks on for size)



"MAKE IT LOOK LIKE THEY'D PEELED SOMEBODY'S FACE"

Robert Burns, Art Director

eventually found the formula in a combination of very thin layers of fibreglass insulation encased in liquid latex. This seemed to have the desired effect: "It was fibrous-looking and it was translucent and it would naturally turn this kind of brownish-yellowish colour," affirms Burns.

Patching up

For authenticity, Burns modelled the masks on real faces. But the realism didn't stop there... In the movie some of the teenagers are dispatched with a sledgehammer by Leatherface. Burns envisaged that the fated owners of the macabre masks would also have been hit with a sledgehammer. So, while making the masks he tried to incorporate the effects of a bashed forehead. He then patched them up with thin wire in order to make the face look as flawless as possible, just as Leatherface would have done – these serial killers don't do things by halves.

Burns considered just how the killers would have made the masks and so sewed certain parts accordingly. As he says, he really wanted "to make it look like they'd peeled somebody's face they'd killed". Similarly with the mouths on the masks, he had them wired open, as Leatherface himself probably would have done, so that he could communicate (in his own way) and, of course, eat those tasty sausages!



Leatherface's masks, from

left to right: Pretty Woman Mask, Grandmother Mask and the Killing Mask.



ACCIDENTS WILL HAPPEN

If you're going to work with power tools, you have to be aware of the health and safety risks involved. Falling over with a whirling chainsaw is never a good idea and when this happens to Leatherface in the final scenes of the movie, he ends up slicing his own leg. Admittedly it's a mere scratch, compared to the fate of his victims, but still, this is actually a very graphic scene, in a movie which relies on suspense techniques rather than gore.

The special effects were simple yet effective. First a metal plate was wrapped across the actor's leg for protection. Then a beef steak and a bag of fake blood were placed on top. There were no stuntmen involved in this scene and a real working chainsaw was used (albeit one that had been filed smooth). Understandably, Hansen was nervous about filming this part. Hooper told him not to worry



Leatherface cuts his own leg open (Hansen). A beef brisket was used to gory effect (top).

as it was the last shot in the movie. But Hansen recalls, "Then I realised what he meant was, if you're killed we've got the movie in the can!" Actually, Hansen really was hurt in this scene. The heat from the friction of the chainsaw on the metal plate burnt through to his leg. No pain, no gain, as they say!

INSPIRING A MASSACRE

The Texas Chainsaw Massacre has been described as one of the scariest movies ever made. When it was released in 1974 it was controversial; today it is a cult classic. But what inspired this twisted masterpiece?

The original *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974) opens with the solemn pronouncement that what we are about to see is based on "one of the most bizarre crimes in the annals of American history". Sadly, this is simply a fine example of the classic horror trick called "false document technique" (see page 16). There was no actual massacre in Texas, with or

without chainsaws, no family of cannibals and no human-skin tailoring serial killer.

Despite all evidence to the contrary, however, *Chainsaw* still exerts a powerful grip over the

gullible. Actor Gunnar Hansen, who played Leatherface, has been approached many times by people who claim to have known or met the real demon defacer! The film does contain elements of truth, though – the eerie, ramshackle house with its bizarre inventory of skin and bone furniture are based on the grisly case of notorious killer Ed Gein.

Real-life monster

On November 17, 1957, police knocked on the door of Eddie Gein's dilapidated farmhouse in Plainfield, Wisconsin. They were investigating the robbery of a local

hardware store and the disappearance of its owner, Bernice Worden. Gein had been spotted loitering around the premises.

What the police discovered at that Plainfield address formed the basis of one of America's most horrendous murder cases. Bernice Worden's corpse was hanging in an outbuilding, headless and gutted, along with the body of another woman, Mary Hogan. Inside the farmhouse, the police found the bones of at least ten other women – many of which had been fashioned into bizarre furniture and decorations. Along with these gruesome human artefacts, was an entire suit made of skin, found hanging in a wardrobe, complete with breasts and female genitalia, and a full facemask with hair – it was made so that Gein could slip it on.

Ed Gein was arrested and convicted of double homicide, although the full crime count also included grave-robbing, suspected cannibalism and necrophilia. He was incarcerated at a secure psychiatric facility and died on July 26, 1984.

Hardware enthusiast Taber Hooper turned the sordid details of Ed Gein's wickedness into an enduring movie legend.



while still at the Central State Hospital for the Criminally Insane. Gein's house of horrors had been burned to the ground some 16 years previously, after an auction of his belongings was proposed. When he was told of the fire he was reported to have said, "just as well." He never admitted to more than the two murders.

Gothic fantasy takes over

Chainsaw director Tobe Hooper had relatives in Wisconsin who lived not far from Ed Gein's house. As a youngster he had heard many lurid stories of the killings themselves and of the human skin lampshades and furniture found in the house. Also, how the killer went as far as to eat his victims! The visualisation of the movie's principal villain, Leatherface, was also inspired by the Gein case. Gein's unhealthy relationship with his domineering mother and strict upbringing ultimately manifested itself as acute silliness around the opposite sex and a desire to become a woman. This aberration grew into the perverted

psychology that resulted in a full-body female skin suit.

Nevertheless, when Tobe Hooper came to co-write *Chainsaw* with Kim Henkel, he remembered only the outline elements of the true-life case. He claims, "I didn't know I was based on Ed Gein until two to three years later." Reiterating the point, Hooper insists that the film wasn't based on any single event or person. Instead, he intended for *Chainsaw* to present "a whole family of Ed Geins!"

Hooper's love of EC Comics (the gory, sensationalistic pulp horror/science fiction comics of the 1950s) also played its part. Such comics prompted a moral backlash against comic books in general, but at seven years old Hooper was enraptured by them, loving their tales of terror and sheer lack of logic. Their influence can be clearly seen in *Chainsaw* and in other Hooper-directed films.

The ultimate power tool

Further eclectic sources of inspiration conspired in Hooper's mind to create

Ed Gein (top), then a wife cannibal, who made himself a female skin suit and whose story inspired *Leatherface*. Two of *Leatherface*'s masks (bottom) were distinctly female, echoing the Gein case.



The Texas Chainsaw Massacre, chief among them a visit to the hardware section of a Montgomery Ward department store during the Christmas shopping rush. Hooper recalls that he was percolating ideas for another movie, involving darkness, isolation and alienation, when he found himself standing in front of a display of chainsaws. The store was crowded, and Hooper – with

FILM FACT

The upturned armadillo shown at the beginning of the film was real road kill, which art director Robert Burns had found while out driving one day. He then bought himself a book on taxidermy so that he could stuff the dead animal himself. Now that's dedication to the cause!

"One of the most bizarre crimes in the annals of American history, *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*"

The opening "crawl" to *Chainsaw*



Inside story

no love of such claustrophobic situations – suddenly found Himself contemplating a novel way of getting back his personal space. “I was standing there in front of an upright display of chainsaws... and the idea just popped: if I start one of these things up and make that sound...” Of course, he refrained from carving himself a path out of the store,

but the idea took root and ultimately germinated when he came to write *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*.

“Too horrible”

Also part of the tapestry of influences and references that ultimately found their way into the film was London

Warwick’s song *Dead Skunk in the Middle of the Road*.

Hooper remembers that the litany of road kill in the lyrics, including a dead dog and a dead raccoon, helped set the mood for the movie. And it was this idea that

inspired the dead armadillo shot at the start of *Chainsaw* – it was originally supposed to be a dead dog, but, ironically, even Hooper had to admit that showing a domesticated animal corpse was “just too horrible”!

Moral schizophrenia

Co-writer Kim Henkel quotes the series of so-called Candy Man killings that took place in Houston, Texas, as an influence on the script. A youth named Elmer Wayne Henley would lure young men to his house, where an older man, Dean Carl, would sexually abuse and then

murder the boys. Elmer Wayne also participated in this, along with a third youth. The case finally came to light when Carl murdered this third man – Elmer Wayne got scared and so went to the police. Kim Henkel recalls seeing news footage of this boy telling reporters that he would take his punishment like a man.

Wayne’s contrasting senses of morality struck Henkel – that the man could partake in these awful crimes and yet still have a set of installed values, which required him to stand up and act with honour and dignity. Henkel refers to the behaviour as a type of “moral schizophrenia”, and decided to employ it with some of the characters in the *Chainsaw* script, most notably the old man who berates Leatherface on discovering that he has wrecked the door with his chainsaw. They may be cannibalistic serial killers, but hey, they still have a sense of pride in their home.

Still to come: Get the low-down on how filming got started – including casting, script-writing and finding the realies.

Elmer Wayne Henley (left) shows police where his victims’ bodies are hidden (below). His “moral schizophrenia” influenced the *Chainsaw* script.



SCREAM STARS



Born in Reykjavik, Iceland, Gunnar Hansen moved to the United States at the age of five. *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* marked Hansen’s first screen role. A graduate of the University of Texas in Austin, Hansen was appearing in college theatre productions in 1973 when he heard that Tobe Hooper was in town, casting for a movie.

“Are you violent?” Hooper asked him at the audition. “No,” Hansen replied simply. “Are you crazy?” “No.” There was a long pause, then Hooper asked, “Can you do that?” (the part of a mentally retarded psychokiller). “Oh yeah,” said Hansen, “that’s easy.” It turns out that Hansen got the part just by walking through the door. At 6’ 4”, Hansen’s sheer physical presence immediately impressed Hooper: “The minute [Gunnar] walked in and filled the door, I knew I wanted him.”

Leatherface was a work in progress. After Hansen attempted to speak his lines, Hooper and co-writer Kim Henkel decided it was too verbal. Instead, Hansen had to develop a range of demented sounds – he was instructed to “squeal like a pig”, for example. In the movie, if you listen carefully, you can hear the results of Hansen’s stagecraft: “Iba goba igee em a” (I’ve been a good boy and I got ‘em all)!

ON LOCATION: THE HOUSE

Nowhere in *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* is the influence of the story of Ed Gein and his gruesome real-life crimes more evident than the set. Almost all the blood-soaked, murderous action takes place at the cannibals' creepy house, which bears an uncanny resemblance to Ed Gein's remote farmhouse in Wisconsin.

Built in the 1890s, the homestead used in the film was located in Quick Hill, Austin, in Texas. It was owned (and occupied) by friends of the art director Robert Burns. The other location — a derelict house next door to the Leatherface house —

the pre-production team immediately made arrangements to shoot there and the filming unit set up one central base camp.

Home sweet home

It soon became clear that the owners couldn't stay in the house during filming. They had been told that their home wouldn't be messed up, but it required extensive set dressing using real flesh, bones and real dead animals, so arrangements were made to move them out to a hotel. "We just came in and stomped all over it," recalls Robert Burns.

It was midsummer in Texas and temperatures were soaring. The inside of the house was filled with hot studio lamps, and the blackout curtains used to keep the lighting conditions even just made things worse. With a house full of the rotting animal carcasses, the stench was vile. "I don't know what they [the owners] did with the house, but I'm sure it had to be fumigated," said assistant director Sallye Richardson. To add insult to injury, the long-suffering owners were led to believe that the crew would be in residence for two days, whereas in fact they had booked two weeks to shoot the footage they needed.

Aftermath

The land where the houses used to stand was later cut off by the construction

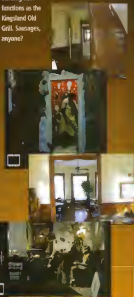
of a new freeway. The 'grandparents' house was completely demolished. But what of Leatherface's delightful abode? Well, it was moved in its entirety to Kingsland, Texas. The building now functions as the Kingsland Old Grill. Sausages, anyone?



The original house of horrors — in real life (above) and in the movie (right).

was found within a few hundred yards,

as the Old County Road 172. Though there appears to be more distance between them in the movie, the two locations were actually just across from one another. This suited Hooper and his crew down to the ground —



Get those chainsaws out of there! A glitzyback house is transformed into a living nightmare.

SCARE TACTICS

When we watch a horror film, we're usually in the comfort of our own home or in the communal safety of the cinema, safe in the knowledge that no harm will come to us. So why do horror films scare us at all? What is it about them that makes them so compelling?

Just like a good white knuckle theme park ride, the horror method used by filmmakers is designed to tap into our most basic animal traits – the “fight-or-flight” instinct, the automatic adrenaline rush that kicks in when faced with mortal danger. A skilful director has a whole armoury of tricks at his disposal to put you – the viewer – inside a life-or-death situation, make it feel realistic, and promote the delicious unease, fright and panic that watching a horror movie entails.

Thrills and spills

No manual exists explaining how to make a film scary. Often time-worn techniques, such as a doorknob that slowly turns or a walk down a dark corridor filled with shadowy recesses where anything could be hiding are enough to unsettle an audience. But there is infinite room for novelty and surprise, and the boundaries are the limits of the director's imagination. The possibility of new shocks and surprises keeps us coming back for more.

Power of suggestion

There is a willing pact between the horror artist and us, the fans. This mutual relationship means the

filmmaker is able to exploit

the eager viewer,

leading them to believe what is going to happen is going to be a lot worse than it ever is. Imagination is always a much more powerful instrument than any gory special effect.

The power of suggestion is put to great use in horror thrillers and can be just as effective as sudden frights. As Alfred Hitchcock, one of the horror film's greatest practitioners, said, “There's no terror in a bang, only in the anticipation of it”. And while the visceral impact of on-screen blood and gore can be truly effective in bringing you out in a cold, grossed-out sweat, it is often the more subtle effects that really pack a psychological punch. So let's find out what kind of techniques film-makers use to build up a head of scream...

Calm before a storm

A somewhat standard scare tactic is to start off a film or scene with an atmosphere of relaxed normality. Think

THE EXPERT OPINION

BY ALAN JONES

Society today seems more fearful than ever. Random acts of violence and high profile murders splash across the headlines every day. The best horror movies play on this element – basing the story line on everyday reality spinning out of control. If something happened in real life then it is much scarier because it could actually happen to you too.

The Texas Chainsaw Massacre, for example, starts building anxiety right from the opening credits. The movie sets out its store with a voice-over, which implies that what follows is a true story:

“The film you are about to see is an account of the tragedy which befell a group of five youths...The events of that day were to lead to the discovery of one of the most bizarre crimes in the annals of American history. The Texas Chainsaw Massacre.”

This trick is called the “false document technique” and it scares the audience by fooling them into believing that the movie is actual fact.

Even though Tobe Hooper's classic chiller was inspired by a grisly true story, most of the plot was entirely made up!





Happy campers... a false sense of security sets the scene in *Friday The 13th Part 2* (top). Whereas, the down-out dinner scene (middle) in *Chainsaw* has viewers fearing the worst for Sally. A dramatic close-up on her eyes (above) intensifies the torment.

Of all those teenagers enjoying a jolly road trip in the opening scenes of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* or chilling out at Camp Crystal Lake in *Friday The 13th* these "meet the principal players" episodes

all provide a valuable insight into the characters, who may well have been in similar situations. So you loosen up and that's precisely the moment when a canny filmmaker worth his blood-spattered salt begins the subtle slide into terror and torment.

The emotional rollercoaster ride in *Chainsaw* begins as soon as the doomed Texas teens pick up a hitchhiker. The blissful unawareness of the kids (and the viewer) grows into doubt and uncertainty, then with an explosion of dread, the hitchhiker cuts his own hand and suddenly slashes the wheelchair-bound Franklin.

But a change of pace from hard-core slasher is necessary from time to time – it would be exhausting to stay on the edge of your seat permanently. In *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, Tobe Hooper lets us off the hook when Sally Hardesty escapes from her tormentors and reaches the gas station. Then – oh dear – the owner turns out to be part of the demented cannibal family and takes her straight back to the slaughterhouse of horrors!

I know something you don't
Showing two people chatting over dinner in a restaurant is a perfectly ordinary situation – and one often used by film directors – to impart plot information. However, show a ticking time bomb under the table and the dynamics of the

scene are totally different. In *Chainsaw*, the dinner scene is a masterpiece of tension. The second cinematic technique is the use of dramatic close-ups. Showing the audience "privileged information" that those other than the protagonists – and, incidentally, was Alfred Hitchcock who realised the value of this cinematographic technique, which has become a staple of horror.

In the *Friday The 13th* series, we are given glimpses of the homicidal maniac Jason Voorhees prowling menacingly in the woods, before the camp counsellors unwisely decide to tiptoe through the trees to their gory fate. In *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, we are shown the instrument of Pain's slow and painful death long before she is actually hung alive and squealing on the meat hook. This stark image is the foreground of the picture plants in our minds the incomprehensibly awful and terrifying possibility of what is about to happen.

Emotional connection

Sally Hardesty's long, drawn-out suffering during the dinner scene in *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* is another fine example of the filmmaker's art. It is totally draining to watch because you are convinced she is going to die – matter-of-factly bludgeoned like an animal in an abattoir, either by the cadaverous grandpa, or one of his demented grandsons. When she does manage to get away, you are with her every painful step of the way. Her

**"THERE'S NO TERROR IN
A BANG, ONLY IN THE
ANTICIPATION OF IT."**

ALFRED HITCHCOCK



...and the way a director uses the camera to create a sense of claustrophobia or to make a scene feel like a nightmare. The director's choice of camera angles and movement can make a scene feel like a nightmare.

When watching a film, we are totally at the mercy of the director. In real life we can choose to look at a scene whichever way we wish. But at the movies we are forced to see events through the narrow letterbox selected for us by the director. The filmmaker's camera angle colours the way we interpret a scene. Low angles suggest oppression and claustrophobia, while high angles give an epic scope and convey that what we're seeing is part of a broader vista. Tilted and assorted awkward angles make us feel uneasy, hint at madness, give a whiff of drug use and imply dream states (every *A Nightmare on Elm Street* uses this trick). Steadycam filming (when a harness holds the camera steady) follows the action smoothly, putting us in the immediate moment of horror, while hand-held cameras impart documentary-style urgency.

The eyes have it

Dramatic close-ups also have their place in a horror filmmaker's lexicon. An unforgettable example is Tobe Hooper's sudden close-up of Sally Hardesty's terrified eyes during the brutally prolonged dinner table scene in *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. Eyes, of course, as any director worth his goose bumps knows, are the doorway to the soul. So a skilful technician will control the intensity of the emotion — wishes to show closing eyes — is

Light work

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...and in film, also use the contrast between light and darkness to create spine-tingling suspense. Why does Jason Voorhees do this? The only thing that makes it a guaranteed way to put your nerves on edge and take you back to that moment of your childhood when your parents switched off the bedroom light for the first time? This idea of darkness and stormy weather instating the raw action (as in *Friday The 13th*) is turned on its head in *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. Staging horror in daylight had rarely been done before and never with such

amazing results. It's what makes it such a landmark classic: Tobe Hooper used the sweltering sun and dry, arid atmosphere as a potent suspense technique. For that bright Texas sun is blinding, a frightening effect in itself, that serves to heighten your sense of vulnerability and make you identify with the protagonists — you can almost feel the scorching heat, the humid strain and the dripping sweat.

LESS IS MORE

Many horror movies use the shock impact of blood and gore to frighten their audience. Others employ clever suspense techniques, firm in the knowledge that the imagination is extremely fertile ground for breeding fear. However, in *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* there is — believe it or not — virtually no graphic violence shown at all. The beauty of Tobe Hooper's masterpiece is that it is reliant solely on the true horror of anticipation and suggestion.

In the first death scene, when Leatherface surprises both Kirk and the audience, you think you see Kirk bludgeoned with a poleaxe. But watch in slow motion and you'll see quite clearly that the axe never makes contact with Kirk's head.

Another memorable scene sees Leatherface carry Pam like a helpless puppet into the back room. The human-skin masked psychopath then sticks her heavily onto one of the meat hooks and your

worst fear becomes reality. Yes, Pam screams in agony and struggles in a hopeless attempt to lift herself off the hook. But, no you don't actually see the end of the hook, the wound or any blood. Similarly, when Leatherface appears suddenly to thrust his chainsaw repeatedly into the helpless Franklin to disembowel him, all you see is the power tool rising and falling and Sally's gut-wrenching reaction. Once more, you are persuaded to see what your imagination tells you, not what's actually on celluloid.

All credit to Hooper who used his craft so spectacularly well that people still praise the amazing special effects in the film... when in actual fact there were hardly any! (Those were to follow in the five sequels and prequels.) The overwhelming sense of revulsion that *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* engendered was more because of the senselessness, cruelty and inhumanity of the crimes it depicted rather than any gruesome bloodletting on screen.



A HORROR GLOSSARY

More facts and figures to help you brush up on your horror knowledge. The New Line horror glossary continues...



AMANDA KRUEGER (NOES 5 & 5)

Also known as

Sister Mary Helena, Amanda Krueger – the mother of Freddy Krueger – features in *Dream Warriors* and *The Dream Child*. Her character's story reveals the origins of Freddy. As a nun working at Weslin Hills Hospital for the mentally ill, she was accidentally locked in over Christmas one year and was raped repeatedly by (in legend has it) 100 maniacs. And thus the psycho slayer, Freddy Krueger, was conceived!

Chain Saw Massacre. He goes through a horrific ordeal in the clutches of Leatherface. First he gets his leg sawn off and then (still alive) he is hung on a meat-hook. When his friend Erin turns up she puts him out of his misery and kills him at his request!

ANDY (F15:5)

In *Friday the 13th Part 3* Andy suffers a very brutal death at the hands of Jason – he gets sliced in half with a machete while walking on his hands.

AMITA (F15:5)

Amita has her throat slashed at the hands of the Jason copycat killer of *A New Beginning*, making her the 11th victim of this film.

ANNIE (F15:1)

Annie is the summer camp cook, from the first *Friday The 13th* film. Unfortunately she never makes it to the camp though, because she has her throat slit with a hunting knife.

ARE YOU READY FOR FREDDY?

The *Dream Master* poster tag-line
ARNOLD, TOM

Together with his then-wife

Rosanne Barr, Tom Arnold makes a cameo appearance in *Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare*.

ASCENSION

This was the original title for Wes Craven's *New Nightmare*.

ASYLUMS

Asylums often feature in horror movies.

Popular themes include the fear of being wrongfully locked up in an asylum, or alternatively, the inmates of an asylum taking over and rampaging. Both these angles are featured in the *Nightmare* series. As part of Freddy's back-story we learn that the rampaging inmates of an asylum

raped his mother. And in *Dream Warriors* the surviving teens of Elm Street are locked up in an asylum, because the authorities don't believe their tales of Krueger's tormented nightly visits.

66 YOU'RE NOT WAS A CURSE ON THE WHOLE OF HUMANITY.

Amanda Krueger is ready in *Nightmare on Elm Street 5: The Dream Child*

AMANDA SHEPHERD (F15: 7)

Mother to Tina, heroine of *The New Blood*, Mrs. Shepherd is Jason's 14th victim.

ANAMORPHIC

This technique is used for capturing a widescreen picture on 35mm film and was used in *Freddy vs Jason*.

ANDY (TCM 2003)

Andy is Leatherface's second victim in the 2003 remake of *The Texas*



WITH ISSUE 3

Your first *Friday The 13th* figurine: Jason Voorhees – Masked Menace, an absolute classic from *Friday The 13th Part 3*

PLUS

How the *Friday The 13th* phenomenon started and where that mask came from

Discover the 3-D special effects that took horror to a new dimension

FRIDAY
THE 13TH



WITH ISSUE 4

Your next *Nightmare* figurine: Freddy Krueger – Melt Down, inspired by his grisly demise in *Freddy's Revenge*.

PLUS

Never say die – the many deaths of the indestructible Freddy

Free theatrical poster for your collection



A Nightmare
ON ELM STREET™

**Who will survive
and what
will be
left of
them?**



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THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE is a true story of a real-life horror. In 1974, a family of five was brutally murdered in a remote area of Texas. The killer was a man named Ed Gein, who had a history of mental illness and was known for his extreme violence. The film is a graphic and disturbing portrayal of these events.

R RESTRICTED

Who will survive and what will be left of them?

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